

HOW A PROJECT MAKES ITS WAY THROUGH THE INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Project Selection Process

Project selection begins when a highway improvement need is identified by a district, the Governor, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Natural Resources, a citizen group, those reviewing accident data for INDOT, or other parties. Once identified, districts or divisions will prioritize individual segments of a project, assign each segment a data management control number, and build an overall project schedule.

Preliminary Engineering Process

The overall improvement sought by a project and its scope are determined during preliminary engineering by the Division of Pre-Engineering and Environment. Environmental impacts and necessary agreements with local utilities (including the railroad) are identified. Normally, land surveying conducted during preliminary engineering will encompass only that which is necessary for defining a project's scope. More detailed surveying will be accomplished during later phases.

Preliminary Design Process

Plan development is the first facet of preliminary design. The project site is surveyed in its entirety, and preliminary construction plans are developed. Plan development may require a field check to verify information gathered during earlier phases. Next, the Design Division uses information gathered during preliminary engineering and develops project plans. With preliminary plans prepared, a hearing is held in the potentially impacted corridor to decide final road location and other issues. A geotechnical investigation of project soils will be conducted after or concurrent to the hearing. Data from the hearing and the investigation will be compared to that gathered earlier, plans will be revised as necessary, and a preliminary final design will be approved and sent to Land Acquisition Division.

Land Acquisition

Land Acquisition reviews the approved design to define property for which INDOT may have to obtain a temporary easement or purchase outright. When purchasing property (including dwellings, business complexes, and other structures, as well as the land itself), an appraisal will be made and negotiations conducted with the owner(s). When agreement cannot be reached, INDOT may exercise its right of eminent domain through the State Attorney General's Office. Land Acquisition will arrange for property payment and the removal or demolition of existing structures. Copies of clear titles are attached to project documents and sent to FHWA for review and approval.

Final Design Process

The first stages of final design may require coordination with local public agencies, beyond that which was conducted during Preliminary Engineering (additional detour and utility relocation agreements may have to be secured). Next, representatives from FHWA, Design Division, the involved district and retained consulting firms will conduct a final field check, edit plans as necessary, and submit the final plans for signature. Once signed, all involved documents are amassed and transmitted to Technical Services Division.

Ready-for-Letting Process

Technical Services and Policy and Budget Divisions arrange project plans for advertising. In general, they ensure all design documents are complete, the right-of-way is clear (meaning required titles and easements have been secured), utility issues are addressed, and funding is available. Once these issues have been resolved, a project is considered ready-for-letting.

Letting Process

Letting begins when a project is advertised. Interested parties bid to perform some or all activities described in the bid documents. INDOT then awards the construction contracts. Not all projects require letting before construction begins. If only INDOT forces will be used to conduct construction activities, for example, the project will not require letting.

Construction Process

Two activities describe the construction process - project management and project completion. Project management refers to those actions taken by a contractor from the point of contract signing to the point of releasing the project site entirely to INDOT's control. Project completion is more loosely defined. Although the project site may have been returned to INDOT for management, a project *may* not be considered complete until all financial obligations have been met.

Auditing Process

Auditing is the process by which INDOT determines whether specifications of a project have been adhered to, whether additional work, perhaps not included in the original statement of work, needs to be done, and whether any illegal/improper acts (collusion) were performed during the course of construction. Data collected during construction or auditing processes may return a project to an earlier process or identify an entirely new project.